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FILE ONLY

Clerk at CIA charged with funneling secrets to Ghanaian agent

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WASHINGTON — The government charged a Central Intelligence Agency employee with handing over U.S. secrets and revealing the names of U.S. intelligence officers and sources to an alleged spy for the government of Ghana.

Sharon M. Scranage, 29, of King George, Va., identified as an aide in the CIA station in Accra, Ghana, was accused of an espionage plot that allegedly began in that African capital in December, 1983.

Similar charges were made against her alleged contact in Ghana, Michael Agbotui Soussoudis, 39, identified only as a man with ties to the government of Ghana and its intelligence service.

Both were arrested in Virginia. Ms. Scranage was stationed in Ghana until May. It was not revealed when she and Mr. Soussoudis arrived in this country. The FBI arrested Ms. Scranage yesterday in Alexandria, Va. On Wednesday, it

arrested Mr. Soussoudis at a Holiday Inn in Springfield, Va. In nearly identical complaints filed in U.S. District Court in Alexandria yesterday, the two were charged with a spying conspiracy; if convicted, they could be sentenced to prison for up to life.

The complaints charged that Ms. Scranage obtained secrets from official CIA files, and passed them on to Mr. Soussoudis as well as to others in the Ghanaian government.

The Associated Press, quoting unnamed Justice Department sources, said that Ms. Scranage and Mr. Soussoudis were lovers. The

wire service also reported that Mr. Soussoudis had been identified as a nephew or cousin of Jerry J. Rawlings, who led a coup to take power in Ghana and is now chairman of its provisional national defense council.

Among the secrets Ms. Scranage allegedly handed over were CIA plans for gathering intelligence in Ghana, the identities of CIA employees, and the identities of persons who gave information secretly to the CIA. She also was allegedly instructed to find out what secrets of the Ghana government had been passed on to the CIA by its sources.

An FBI affidavit filed with the court said that Ms. Scranage had been questioned by agents this week in McLean, Va., and claimed that she admitted handing over the identity of the CIA's station chief in Accra — the capital of Ghana — as well as the identities of all other employees there, the names of confidential sources, CIA cables, and data about a CIA report on military equipment requested by a Ghanaian group from Libya.